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The Worship of Nature

BY

JOHN G. WHITTIER

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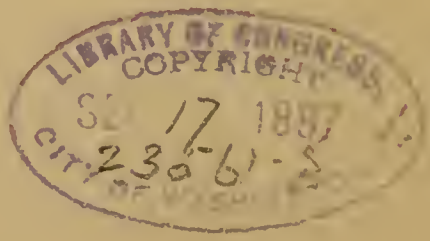

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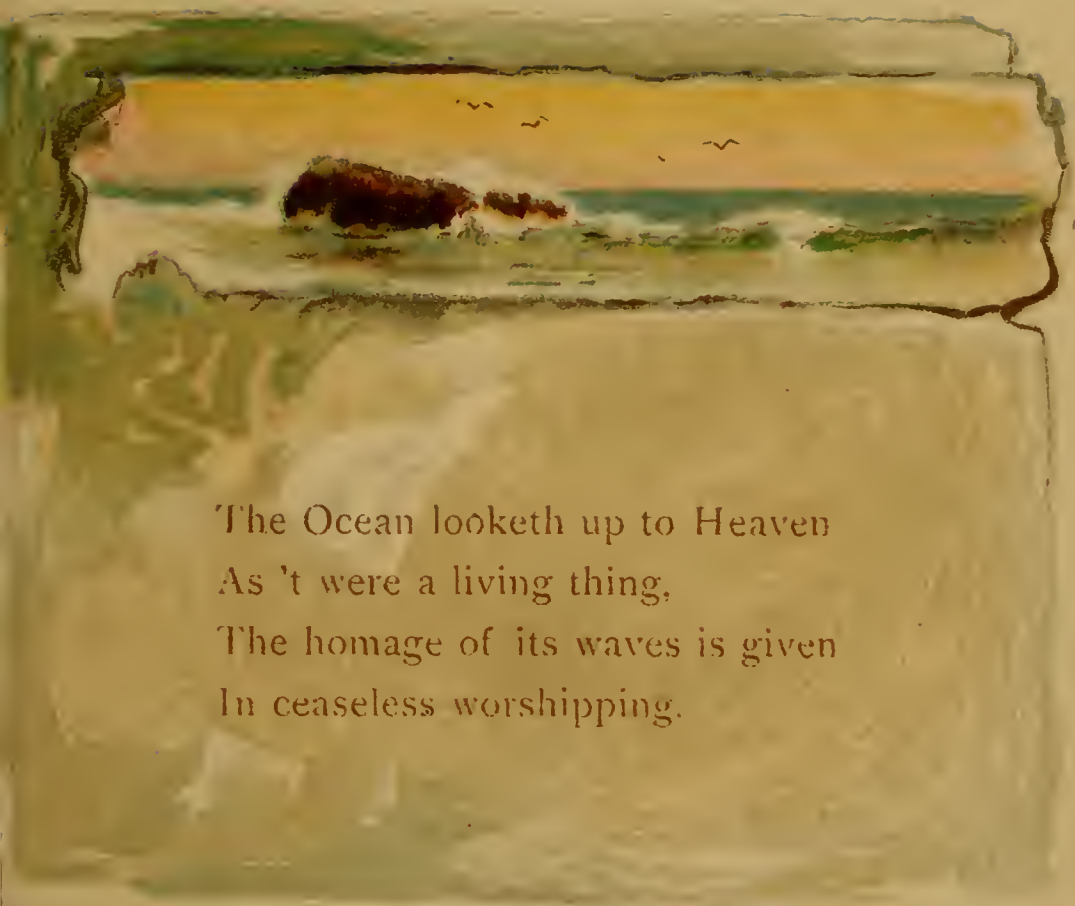


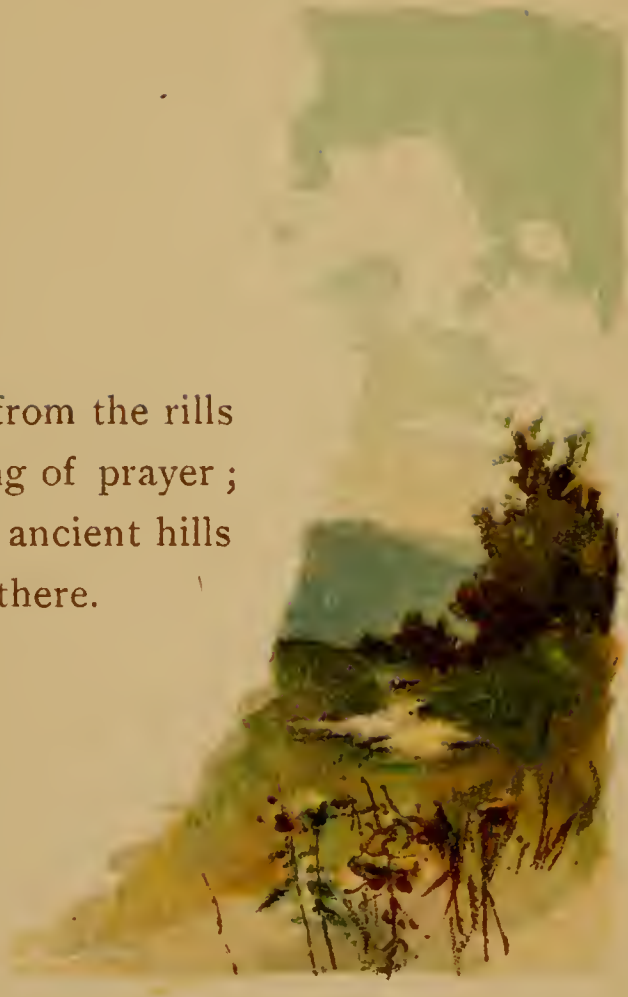
The Ocean looketh up to Heaven
As 't were a living thing,
The homage of its waves is given
In ceaseless worshipping.

They kneel upon the sloping sand,
As bends the human knee,
A beautiful and tireless band,
The Priesthood of the Sea!

They pour the glittering treasures out
Which in the deep have birth,
And chant their awful hymns about
The advancing hills of earth.

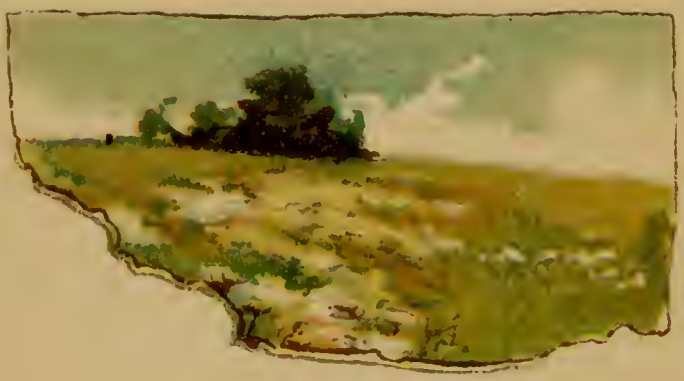
The green earth sends its incense up
From every mountain shrine,
From every flower and dewy cup
That greeteth the sunshine.

The mists are lifted from the rills
Like the white wing of prayer;
They lean above the ancient hills
As doing homage there.



The forest tops are lowly cast
O'er breezy hill and glen,
As if a prayerful spirit pass'd
On Nature as on men.

The clouds weep o'er the fallen world
E'en as repentant love,
Ere to the blessed breeze unfurl'd
They fade in light above.



Thy sky is as a temple's arch,
The blue and wavy air
Is glorious with the spirit-march
Of messengers of prayer.

The gentle moon, the kindling sun,
The many stars, are given
As shrines to burn earth's incense on —
The altar-fires of heaven!

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